

FINFET WITH LOW GATE CAPACITANCE AND LOW EXTRINSIC RESISTANCE

DESCRIPTION

[Para 1] BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[Para 2] Field of the Invention

[Para 3] The invention generally relates to microelectronic devices, and more particularly to the design and manufacturing of FinFET devices having improved performance characteristics.

[Para 4] Description of the Related Art

[Para 5] Thin-silicon-body field effect transistors (FETs) present a challenge to providing a low-resistance conduction path from the contacts to the source and drain electrodes to the intrinsic channel region in between the source and drain electrodes. Typically, one must expand (flair out) the thickness of the body by some distance beyond its egress from beneath the gate to provide adequate electrical conduction. However, if this expansion (flair out) is made more than several body thicknesses away from the gate, then the added resistance from the relatively long line of thin silicon in the extrinsic region adds substantial extrinsic resistance to the device, thereby degrading device performance.

[Para 6] On the other hand, if the expansion (flair out) is made relatively near the gate electrode, then the capacitance between the wide extrinsic region and the gate becomes large thereby increasing gate capacitance, which then causes degradation in device performance. For example, outer-fringe gate-drain capacitance (C_{of}) can be high in FinFET devices, which degrades device performance. Some conventional approaches have relied on means of tapering or stepping the width of the silicon as it exits the gate. The tapered designs typically rely on damascene gates, while the stepped-width designs have typically required multiple spacers and silicon growths or depositions. While these solutions have provided a possible solution to the low gate capacitance and low extrinsic resistance trade-off, the actual design and fabrication of such structures capable of achieving this trade-off has been extremely difficult and quite expensive.

[Para 7] Figures 1 and 2 illustrate an example of a conventional FinFET device 1. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the conventional FinFET device 1 comprises a substrate 10 with a buried oxide (BOX) layer 15 over the substrate 10. On top of the BOX layer 15 there are source/drain regions 20 with a gate 30 disposed therebetween. Furthermore, the gate 30 contacts the BOX layer 15. A plurality of fins 35 are formed within and transverse to the gate 30. Additionally, an oxide capping layer 25 is formed over the source/drain regions 20 as well as over the fins 35.

[Para 8] The industry has recognized that a compromise must be made between the low extrinsic resistance and the low gate capacitance in such structures (for example the FinFET device 1) to alleviate the degraded performance characteristics conventionally found in these devices. However, until now no known adequate

solution has been designed and fabricated. Therefore, there remains a need for a novel method and structure, which provides superior FinFET device performance while simultaneously achieving the low extrinsic resistance and low gate capacitance trade-off.

[Para 9] SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[Para 10] In view of the foregoing, an embodiment of the invention provides a field effect transistor (FET) comprising a substrate, an isolation layer comprising a buried oxide (BOX) layer positioned over the substrate, source/drain regions above the isolation layer, a fin structure over the isolation layer, conducting spacers positioned adjacent to the fin structure, with a gate insulator positioned between the spacers and the fin, a first insulator, preferably comprising nitride, adjacent to the spacers, a second insulator adjacent to the first insulator, and a gate layer positioned on the fin structure, the spacers, and the second insulator, wherein, in the preferred embodiment, the spacers and the gate layer comprise the same material, polysilicon, and wherein the isolation layer is adjacent to the first insulator, the spacers, and the fin structure. Also, the fin structure comprises an oxide layer over a silicon layer. Moreover, the FET further comprises an oxide layer adjacent to the fin structure. In an alternate embodiment, the FET further comprises a second oxide layer over the oxide layer, wherein the second oxide layer is planar to the gate layer.

[Para 11] Another aspect of the invention provides a FET device comprising a substrate, an isolation layer positioned over the substrate, source/drain regions above the isolation layer, a fin

structure over the isolation layer, a first gate electrode adjacent to the fin structure, with a gate insulator positioned between the gate electrode and the fin, a second gate electrode positioned transverse to the first gate electrode, and a third gate electrode positioned on the fin structure, the first gate electrode, and the second gate electrode, wherein, in the preferred embodiment, the first gate electrode, and the third gate electrode comprise the same material, polysilicon, and the second gate electrode comprises polycrystalline silicon-germanium, and wherein the isolation layer is (a) positioned beneath the insulator, the first gate electrode, and the fin structure, and (b) is isolated from the second gate electrode. The device further comprises a dielectric material sandwiching the second gate electrode, wherein the dielectric material, in the preferred embodiment, comprises silicon dioxide. Also, in the preferred embodiment, the fin structure comprises an oxide layer over a silicon layer. Moreover, the device further comprises an oxide layer adjacent to the fin structure. In an alternate embodiment, the device further comprises a second oxide layer over the oxide layer, wherein the second oxide layer is planar to the third gate electrode.

[Para 12] Another embodiment of the invention provides a method of lowering a gate capacitance and extrinsic resistance in a field effect transistor, wherein the method comprises forming an isolation layer comprising a BOX layer over a substrate, configuring source/drain regions above the isolation layer, forming a fin structure over the isolation layer, configuring a first gate electrode adjacent to the fin structure, disposing a gate insulator between the first gate electrode and the fin structure, positioning a second gate electrode transverse to the first gate electrode, and depositing a third gate electrode on the fin structure, the first gate electrode, and

the second gate electrode, wherein the isolation layer is formed beneath the insulator, the first gate electrode, and the fin structure. The method further comprises sandwiching the second gate electrode with a dielectric material. The fin structure is formed by depositing an oxide layer over a silicon layer. The method further comprises forming an oxide layer adjacent to the fin structure. In an alternate embodiment, the method further comprises forming a second oxide layer over the oxide layer, wherein the second oxide layer is planar to the third gate electrode. Additionally, the method comprises using the same material to form the first gate electrode and the third gate electrode, wherein the material comprises polysilicon, and using poly-crystalline silicon germanium for the second gate electrode material.

[Para 13] As a result of the embodiments of the invention, FinFETs with lower gate capacitance, lower drain and source capacitance and reduce extrinsic resistance can be achieved. Improved circuit performance, reduced switching time, and decreased power consumptions comprise some of the advantages which flow from the embodiments of the invention. Improved radio-frequency and analog circuit operation are also enabled by both the reduced drain-to-gate capacitance and the reduced extrinsic resistance advantages of the inventive embodiments.

[Para 14] These and other aspects of the embodiments of the invention will be better appreciated and understood when considered in conjunction with the following description and the accompanying drawings. It should be understood, however, that the following descriptions, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention and numerous specific details thereof, are given by way of illustration and not of limitation. Many changes and

modifications may be made within the scope of the embodiments of the invention without departing from the spirit thereof, and the embodiments of the invention include all such modifications.

[Para 15] BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[Para 16] The embodiments of the invention will be better understood from the following detailed description with reference to the drawings, in which:

[Para 17] Figure 1 is a front view of a conventional FinFET device;

[Para 18] Figure 2 is a side view cut along line A–A' of the conventional FinFET device of Figure 1;

[Para 19] Figures 3 through 5 are side views of intermediate processing steps of a FinFET device according to an embodiment of the invention;

[Para 20] Figure 6 is a side view of an intermediate processing step of a FinFET device according to a first embodiment of the invention;

[Para 21] Figure 7 is a side view of an intermediate processing step of a FinFET device according to a second embodiment of the invention;

[Para 22] Figure 8 is a side view of a FinFET device according to a first embodiment of the invention;

[Para 23] Figure 9 is a top view of a FinFET device according to a first and second embodiment of the invention;

[Para 24] Figure 10(a) is a front view cut along line AA-AA' of the FinFET device of Figure 9 according to a first embodiment of the invention;

[Para 25] Figure 10(b) is a front view cut along line AA-AA' of the FinFET device of Figure 9 according to a second embodiment of the invention;

[Para 26] Figure 11(a) is a perspective view of a partially completed FinFET device according to a first embodiment of the invention;

[Para 27] Figure 11(b) is a perspective view of a partially completed FinFET device according to a second embodiment of the invention;

[Para 28] Figure 12(a) is a perspective view of a FinFET device according to a first embodiment of the invention;

[Para 29] Figure 12(b) is a perspective view of a FinFET device according to a second embodiment of the invention; and

[Para 30] Figure 13 is a flow diagram illustrating a preferred method of an embodiment of the invention.

[Para 31] DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED

[Para 32] EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[Para 33]

[Para 34] The embodiments of the invention and the various features and advantageous details thereof are explained more fully with reference to the non-limiting embodiments that are illustrated in the accompanying drawings and detailed in the following

description. It should be noted that the features illustrated in the drawings are not necessarily drawn to scale. Descriptions of well-known components and processing techniques are omitted so as to not unnecessarily obscure the embodiments of the invention. The examples used herein are intended merely to facilitate an understanding of ways in which the embodiments of the invention may be practiced and to further enable those of skill in the art to practice the embodiments of the invention. Accordingly, the examples should not be construed as limiting the scope of the embodiments of the invention.

[Para 35] As mentioned, there remains a need for a novel method and structure, which provides superior FinFET device performance while simultaneously achieving the low extrinsic resistance and low gate capacitance trade-off. In order to address this need, an embodiment of the invention provides a FinFET device that effectively removes large portions of the gate electrode which would otherwise have been adjacent to the source/drain regions, thus lowering the gate-to-drain and gate-to-source capacitances. Furthermore, the source/drain regions can be formed a shorter distance from the gate to lower the extrinsic resistance of the FinFET device, without significant gate capacitance increase. Using the embodiments of the invention, a flair in the silicon extrinsic region designed at a small distance of approximately three to five body-thicknesses beyond the gate in a self-aligned manner may be implemented, thus achieving low extrinsic resistance, and means of tapering the gate electrode in a manner that is self-aligned to the gate edge in order to avoid the high drain-to-gate capacitance. Referring now to the drawings, and more particularly to Figures 3

through 13, there are shown preferred embodiments of the invention.

[Para 36] A FinFET device 100 according to an embodiment of the invention is illustrated in the generally sequential fabrication steps illustrated in Figures 3 through 8. As shown in Figure 3, a silicon-on-insulator (SOI) wafer 105 is formed by any of a set of known fabrication sequences, such as Separation by Implantation of Oxygen (SIMOX) or Bond and Etch-back Silicon On Insulator (BESOI) methods, resulting in a buried oxide (BOX) layer 115 over a substrate 110. Formed over the BOX layer 115 is a silicon layer 135 capped by an oxide layer 125. Collectively, the silicon layer 135 and the oxide layer 125 form the fin structure 170. In this case the BOX layer 115 comprises the isolation layer for the FinFET device 100. Alternatively, a bulk silicon wafer capped by an oxide layer 125 can be etched to form the fin structure 170, and an isolation layer (BOX layer 115) formed above the etched silicon, for example, by deposition and etch-back of SiO_2 . A gate dielectric layer 160, preferably silicon oxy-nitride, is then formed, or deposited along the sides of the silicon layer 135 (and on top of the oxide layer 125, when formed by deposition). Thereafter, a first electrode 145 is formed along the sides of gate dielectric layer 160 and the top of the oxide layer 125 of the fin structure 170, as shown in Figure 4. The first electrode 145 preferably comprises polysilicon and is implanted with a dopant, such as arsenic or boron.

[Para 37] Next, as shown in Figure 5, an insulator liner 155, preferably comprising nitride, is grown over the entire structure 100 (e.g., by chemical vapor deposition). Thereafter, according to a first embodiment as shown in Figure 6, a second insulator 147, which may comprise silicon dioxide, is formed adjacent to the nitride liner

155. Then, a partial etch is performed, whereby the second insulator 147, is etched back and planarized, exposing a portion of the nitride liner 155 surrounding the upper portion of the fin structure 170. This exposed portion of the nitride liner 155 is then etched, thereby exposing top surfaces of the first gate electrode 145. Furthermore, the top layer of the oxide material 160 is removed from the top of the oxide layer 125 of the fin structure 170 according to the first embodiment. In the second embodiment illustrated in Figure 7, a second gate electrode 140 is formed adjacent to the nitride liner 155 and transverse to the first electrode 145. Moreover, according to the second embodiment, the top oxide layer 160 over the oxide layer 125 is kept intact, and as such is not etched away, which is also shown in Figure 7.

[Para 38] In accordance with the first embodiment, upon completion of the above steps, a second gate electrode 130 (i.e., the gate of the FinFET device 100) is deposited over the second insulator 147, exposed portions of the nitride liner 155, and exposed portions of the first gate electrode 145, as shown in Figure 8. Here, a fin cap oxide 165 is deposited over the oxide layer 125. However, such a cap oxide 165 is not necessary according to the second embodiment, which retains the oxide layer 160 over the oxide layer 125. Thereafter, the device 100 undergoes further patterning and etching.

[Para 39] Generally, Figure 7 (second embodiment) and Figure 8 (first embodiment) illustrate the side view of the FinFET 100 cut along line BB-BB' of Figure 9. Moreover, Figures 10(a) (first embodiment) and 10(b) (second embodiment) illustrate the front view of the Fin FET 100 cut along line AA-AA' of Figure 9, where the several adjoining layers of the FinFET device 100 can be cross-

sectionally viewed. Furthermore, source/drain conductive regions 120 are deposited/grown on the device 100 as is shown in Figures 9 and 10(a) and 10(b). Figure 10(a) illustrates the second insulator 147 positioned underneath the gate 130 and in between the dielectric layer 150. Figure 10(b) illustrates the second gate electrode 140 positioned underneath the third gate electrode 130 and in between the dielectric layer 150. Additionally, a portion of the oxide layer 125 remains over the source/drain regions 120 in both embodiments.

[Para 40] Figures 11(a) and 12(a) illustrate perspective views of the FinFET 100 according to the first embodiment, while Figures 11(b) and 12(b) illustrate perspective views of the FinFET 100 according to the second embodiment, where the oxide layer 160 is retained over the oxide layer 125. The FinFET devices 100 in Figures 11(a) and 11(b) are illustrated prior to the deposition of the dielectric layer 150, which is shown in Figures 12(a) and 12(b). As such, in Figures 12(a) and 12(b), fully planarized FinFET devices 100 are illustrated.

[Para 41] The FinFET device 100 effectively removes large portions of the gate electrode which would otherwise have been adjacent to the source/drain regions 120, thus lowering the gate-to-drain and gate-to-source capacitances. Furthermore, the source/drain regions 120 can be formed a shorter distance from the gate 130 to lower the extrinsic resistance of the FinFET device 100, without significant gate capacitance increase.

[Para 42] Another embodiment of the invention is illustrated in the flowchart of Figure 13, which includes descriptions which refer to components provided in Figures 3 through 12(b), whereby Figure 13 depicts a method of lowering a gate capacitance and

extrinsic resistance in a FinFET device 100, wherein the method comprises forming (201) an isolation layer comprising a BOX layer 115 over a substrate 110, configuring (203) source/drain regions 120 over the isolation layer 115, and forming (205) a fin structure 170 over the isolation layer 115. The method further includes configuring (207) a first gate electrode 145 adjacent to the fin structure 170, disposing (209) a gate insulator 160 between the first gate electrode 145 and the fin structure 170, positioning (211) a second gate electrode 140 transverse to the first gate electrode 145, and depositing (213) a third gate electrode 130 on the fin structure 170, the first gate electrode 145, and the second gate electrode 145, wherein the isolation layer 115 is positioned below the gate insulator 160, the first gate electrode 145, and the fin structure 170.

[Para 43] The method further comprises sandwiching the second gate electrode 140 with a dielectric material 150. The fin structure 170 is formed by depositing an oxide layer 125 over a silicon layer 135. The method further comprises forming an oxide layer 160 adjacent to the fin structure 170. In an alternate embodiment, the method further comprises forming a second oxide layer 165 over the oxide layer 160, wherein the second oxide layer 165 is planar to the third gate electrode 130. Additionally, the method comprises using the same material to form the first gate electrode 145 and the third gate electrode 130, wherein the material comprises polysilicon.

[Para 44] The embodiments of the invention may also apply to the case where the fin structure 170 comprises a silicon fin 135 surrounded on the two side surfaces and the top surface by gate oxide 160. In this case all three surfaces provide electrical

channels for the FET (sometimes referred to as a Trigate FET) and is advantageous to keep the height of the silicon fin 170 comparable to the width of the silicon fin 170, with a favorable ratio of the height to the width between 2:3 and 5:4.

[Para 45] The first gate electrode 145 may be also be chosen from any of a number of metals or alloys of metals, including so-called mid-gap work-function metals such as tungsten or nickel silicide. The second gate electrode 140 may comprise any material which may be selectively removed in the presences of the silicon fin 135, the first 145 and third 130 gate electrodes, and the various dielectrics in place. The preferred material for the second electrode 140 comprises a SiGe alloy preferably with approximately 20% to 60% Ge. The third gate electrode 130 may comprise any conducting material compatible with ordinary silicon processing conditions, such as doped polysilicon, tungsten, or tungsten silicide.

[Para 46] As a result of the embodiments of the invention, FinFETs with lower gate capacitance, lower drain and source capacitance and reduce extrinsic resistance can be achieved. Improved circuit performance, reduced switching time, and decreased power consumptions comprise some of the advantages which flow from the embodiments of the invention such as FinFET structure 100. Improved radio-frequency and analog circuit operation are also enabled by both the reduced drain-to-gate capacitance and the reduced extrinsic resistance advantages of the inventive embodiments.

[Para 47] Generally, the embodiments of the invention provide a technique of lowering the gate-to-drain capacitance in a FinFET device 100 by reducing the height of the gate 130 in the non-

essential areas located between and beyond the fins 170. This is accomplished by forming polysilicon gate sidewalls parallel to the fins 170 (with an oxide layer 160 formed therebetween) and adjacent to the fin oxide layer 125, and including a gate cap 165 connected to a gate strap 130, which serves as the gate of the device 100. The FinFET device 100 effectively removes large portions of the gate electrode which would otherwise have been adjacent to the source/drain regions 120, thus lowering the gate-to-drain and gate-to-source capacitances. Furthermore, the source/drain regions 120 can be formed a shorter distance from the gate 130 to lower the extrinsic resistance of the FinFET device 100, without significant gate capacitance increase.

[Para 48] The foregoing description of the specific embodiments will so fully reveal the general nature of the invention that others can, by applying current knowledge, readily modify and/or adapt for various applications such specific embodiments without departing from the generic concept, and, therefore, such adaptations and modifications should and are intended to be comprehended within the meaning and range of equivalents of the disclosed embodiments. It is to be understood that the phraseology or terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description and not of limitation. Therefore, while the invention has been described in terms of preferred embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that the embodiments of the invention can be practiced with modification within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

